



City of Santa Barbara
Fire Prevention Bureau

Solar Photovoltaic System Requirements

This information sheet is to make you aware of the current requirements for the installation of solar photovoltaic systems in accordance with the 2013 California Residential Code as adopted by Municipal Ordinance.

Marking. Marking is required on the interior and exterior direct-current (DC) conduit, enclosures, raceways, cable assemblies, junction boxes, combiner boxes and disconnects (R331.2).

Materials. The materials used for marking shall be reflective, weather resistant and suitable for the environment. Marking shall have all letters capitalized with a minimum height of 3/8 inch white on red background (R331.2.1).

Marking content. The marking shall contain the words “WARNING: PHOTOVOLTAIC POWER SOURCE” (R331.2.2).

Main service disconnect. The marking shall be placed adjacent to the main service disconnect in a location clearly visible from the location where the disconnect is operated (R331.2.3).

Roof access points. Roof access points shall be located in areas that do not require the placement of ground ladders over openings such as windows or doors, and located at strong points of building construction in locations where the access does not conflict with overhead obstructions such as tree limbs, wires or signs (R331.4.1).

Residential buildings with hip roof layouts. Panels/modules installed on residential buildings with hip roof layouts shall be located in a manner that provides a 3-foot-wide clear access pathway from the eave to the ridge on each slope where panels/modules are located. The access pathway shall be located at a structurally strong location on the building capable of supporting the live load of firefighters accessing the roof (R331.4.2.1).

Residential buildings with a single ridge. Panels/modules installed on residential buildings with a single ridge shall be located in a manner that provides two, 3-foot-wide access pathways from the eave to the ridge on each roof slope where panels/modules are located (R331.4.2.2).

Residential buildings with roof hips and valleys. Panels/modules installed on residential buildings with roof hips and valleys shall be located no closer than 18 inches to a hip or valley. Where panels are to be located on only one side of a hip or valley that is of equal length, the panels shall be permitted to be placed directly adjacent to the hip or valley (R331.4.2.3).

Residential building smoke ventilation. Panels/modules installed on residential buildings shall be located no higher than 3 feet below the ridge in order to allow for fire department smoke ventilation operations (R331.4.2.4).

*Please refer to the Building and Safety Division’s handout for submittal requirements and additional information.